



Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement

CI-H Description & Criteria for Faculty and Instructors/Departments and Administrators

General Description

- The CI-H (Communication Intensive in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences) subjects provide a foundation in effective expository and argumentative writing and oral communication.
- CI-H subjects are classes appropriate for freshmen and sophomores in the HASS curriculum in which students plan, organize, draft, and revise a series of sequenced assignments based on course material.
- CI-H subjects provide students with instruction, practice, and feedback in communication skills with the goals of achieving: clarity in writing; greater facility in oral communication; the ability to structure a persuasive argument; an understanding of the use of sources and scholarly materials.

Desired Outcomes

- Students are familiar with the different elements of the writing process (e.g., pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing).
- Students' work reflects an awareness of the rhetorical dimensions of writing—the audience for whom one is writing, and the purpose for which one is writing (e.g., to argue, inform, persuade, explain, or convince).
- Students approach a writing assignment as a series of tasks, including evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate sources.
- Students apply the appropriate conventions of documenting and citing sources.
- Students demonstrate improvement in their oral communication skills.

Mechanical Criteria

- All CI-H subjects must include:
 - at least 5,000 words of writing¹ typically divided among three to five assignments, distributed reasonably across the semester.
 - at least one assignment that is revised and resubmitted. This revision will not count toward the total word count. Separate grades will be given for the paper and the revised paper. Both grades will count towards the final grade. Instructors will determine the weighting of the grades.
 - an assessed oral component (e.g. presentations, student-led discussion, class participation, or a combination thereof).

This is a minimum requirement. Subjects may include additional assignments (e.g., journals, response papers, or posts to the class's discussion forum or blog).

- In order to guarantee sufficient attention to student writing and ample opportunity for oral expression, all sections of CI-H subjects must be capped at 18 students.

¹ Typically, one page of 12-point Times New Roman text that is double-spaced and has one-inch margins equals 250 words. The length of assignments should be measured in words on all syllabi.

- For subjects taught in a lecture/recitation format, each section must be capped at 18 students.
- For subjects taught in a seminar format, when a Writing Advisor is assigned to the subject, enrollment can rise to 25 students.
 - Writing Advisors are assigned to CI-H subjects to increase communication instruction and to provide a pedagogical resource to students and faculty.
- The communication activities are expected to comprise the substantial majority of the final grade.

Recommended Practices

- Students receive timely, careful, thoughtful, and thorough response to work in progress from the instructor to guide them in revision. For example:
 - Instructors may offer response in a variety of ways, from marginal comments, to evaluative letters, to one-on-one meetings or conferences.
 - Peer review often allows students to develop a critical vocabulary and become better readers not only of other students' writing, but also of their own.
 - CI-H subjects often require a conference with the instructor as a part of the revision process.
- Students receive feedback on their oral communication. For example:
 - Instructors may offer feedback in a variety of ways, from email, to evaluative letters, to conferences.
 - Guided peer feedback on oral presentations helps students to become better communicators themselves. Asking students to complete a rubric or checklist may guide their feedback.
- Students are given many opportunities to read and are able to identify outstanding forms of writing.

Support

For additional information on proposing CI-H subjects or integrating communication instruction, please contact Kathleen MacArthur, Associate Dean for Curriculum and Faculty Support, at 617-253-2783 or kmacarth@mit.edu.

If you are interested in teaching a CI-H subject with the assistance of a Writing Advisor (a specially-trained lecturer in Writing Across the Curriculum), you are encouraged to submit a separate proposal to request a Writing Advisor. For more information, please contact Suzanne Lane, Director of Writing, Rhetoric, and Professional Communication, at 617-452-5009 or stlane@mit.edu.

Proposing or modifying a CI-H subject

- CI-H subjects are reviewed and designated by the Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement. A list of current CI-H subjects is available online.
- Faculty members wishing to propose new CI-H subjects or substantial revisions to existing ones should contact their department head and the Office of the Communication Requirement.
- CI-H subjects are typically approved for a term of 5 years.
 - New subjects are often approved for an initial term of 3 years.
 - As instructors change, SOCR expects the subject will continue to meet the criteria for CI-H subjects.